

Agency Overview

In 1993, the Idaho Department of Commerce convened 45 representatives of economic development groups who supported the manufacturing extension center concept. One year later, the Governor and ten key economic development entities pledged support for manufacturing extension by signing Idaho's Technology Partnership Agreement. Approval to establish "TechHelp" within the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) was granted in late 1995. In 1996, TechHelp was established at Boise State University and the first director and field engineer were appointed.

Today, TechHelp is a partnership of Idaho's three state universities and an affiliate of the NIST/MEP system. It is also Idaho's EDA University Center, targeting economically distressed areas of Idaho. TechHelp specialists have access to cutting-edge knowledge through links to local universities and to a national network of over 2000 manufacturing specialists through the MEP system.

TechHelp's team of nine manufacturing specialists operates out of offices in Boise, Post Falls, Idaho Falls and Twin Falls. TechHelp's primary mission is to provide technical assistance, training and information to strengthen the competitiveness of Idaho manufacturers, processors and innovators through product and process improvements. TechHelp also provides internships to Idaho university and graduate level students at the TechHelp New Product Development Center (NPD) at Boise State University. Internships give Idaho university students the opportunity to gain real world experience with growing Idaho companies and exposes Idaho companies to talented young professionals looking to enter the state's workforce.

TechHelp Advisory Board

TechHelp's executive director, Gary Thompson, takes advisement from a board made up of representatives from private industry, education and government. TechHelp Board bylaws state that a full board consists of 17 members; twelve from manufacturing and five from the public sector. The Director appoints ex-officio members with approval of the Board. TechHelp is currently seeking new board members to fill empty manufacturing and the public sector positions.

Manufacturing Members		
Name	Position	Company
Jim Bean (Chair)	General Manager	Preco, Inc.
Louise Bertagnolli	President	JST Manufacturing Inc.
Lynn Harker	President	Woodland Furniture
Rick Jackson	Production Manager	Louisiana Pacific
John Larkin	Owner	Machine Language Inc.
Herb Minatre	President/Owner	Bay Shore Systems
Barry Ramsay	President	D8, Inc.
Jerry Whitehead	President/Owner	Western Trailers
Phil Duckworth	VP	Buck Knives (Proposed 11/05)
OPEN		
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Public Sector and Services Members		
Karl Tueller	Deputy Director	Idaho Department of Commerce
Laura Johnson	Bureau Chief	Idaho Department of Agriculture
Jay Kunze	Dean	College of Engineering, Idaho State University
Jim Hogge	State Director	Idaho SBDC
OPEN		

Ex-Officio Members		
John Andreason	Senator	Idaho Legislature
Richard Bowen	President	Idaho State University
Shirl Boyce	V.P. of Economic Development	Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce
Bill Lathen	Dean of College of Business	Boise State University
Roger Madsen	Director	Idaho Dept. of Labor
Larry Stauffer	Dean College of Engineering	University of Idaho
Pat Takasugi	Director	Idaho Dept. of Agriculture

TechHelp Partners

TechHelp works with a variety of state and federal partners to meet its mission of assisting Idaho manufacturers and processors.

Partnership	Center Role	Required/Desired of Center
U.S. EDA	EDA University Center	Serve remote/distressed areas of Idaho Serve non-manufacturers in Idaho
State of Idaho	Economic Development	Serve all manufacturers in Idaho Participate in implementation of Science & Technology Plan with product development service
Idaho State Universities	Contracted Partner (outreach program for economic development)	Build University reputation through professional development activity, training and internships
Idaho SBDC		Available for referrals
U.S. Dept. of Labor		Help Idaho food processors implement Lean Manufacturing practices and educate Hispanic employees in Lean English Essentials (LEE)
Idaho Commerce & Labor	Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)	Increase government contracting by Idaho manufacturers
Idaho Dept. of Agriculture		Available for referrals

Core Functions/Idaho Code

TechHelp finds solutions for Idaho manufacturers primarily through one-on-one contact with companies. This contact ranges from major collaborative projects, which usually address a fundamental challenge facing the company, to smaller "value-added" projects, which typically bring a specific improvement to some aspect of company operations.

TechHelp's team of experts provides personalized solutions in every area of manufacturing including:

- **New Product Development**
 - Product Planning
 - Product Design
 - Prototyping & Testing
 - Manufacturing Assistance
 - Marketing Assistance
- **Process Improvements**
 - Lean Manufacturing
 - Lean for the Food Industry
 - Lean for the Wood Products Industry
- **Quality Systems**
 - ISO 9000
- **Human Performance**
- **Business Systems**
- **Marketing and Sales**
- **Information Technology**

Testimonials:

Rekluse Motorsports, Boise

"The successful development of the z-Start clutch is a testament to the value and quality of TechHelp's services. I can honestly say that without TechHelp, Rekluse Motor Sports and the z-Start Clutch would not exist today."

Al Youngwerth Owner, Rekluse Motor Sports

- Rekluse founded in 2002
- Clutch developed with TechHelp during a six month period
- Revenue for 2003 and 2004 exceeded \$1,000,000
- Revenue forecast of \$1.5 - \$2 Million in 2005 is expected to double annually
- Exports for 2004 exceed \$300,000
- Rekluse created 13 new jobs since 2003 and expects to employ 25-30 by the end of 2006
- TechHelp NPD intern is now Rekluse product development manager

Selkirk Metalbestos, Nampa

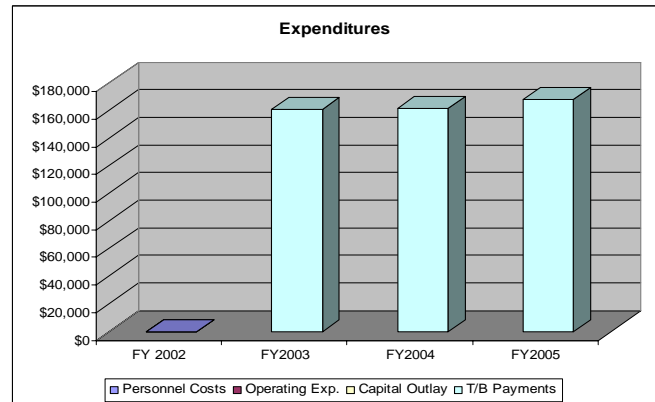
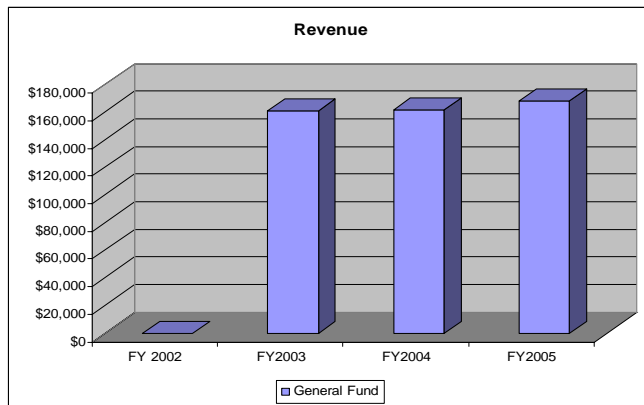
"Prior to TechHelp, Selkirk Nampa's mass production mentality toward manufacturing led to plant inefficiencies and cost control issues that troubled our new ownership team. TechHelp helped Selkirk develop increased focus and attention to the principles of lean manufacturing that allowed us to make improvements in efficiency and cost control envisioned by management."

Kevin Redd, Selkirk Production Manager and Lean Champion

- Improved productivity 25 - 40% and reduced scrap by 15-30%
- Reduced setup time on key machines by 50-75%
- Reduced batch sizes from 250-500 to one-piece flow matching production to customer demand
- Reduced lead times for finished product from 3 – 5 weeks to 3 – 5 days
- Lowered inventory levels from \$3 Million to \$1.25 Million
- Created a three-fold improvement in inventory turns
- Eliminated the need for a \$30K per year warehouse facility
- Saved \$15,000/yr from reduced WIP, increased inventory turnover, and reduced inventory

Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
General Fund	\$0	\$160,600	\$161,700	\$167,900
Total	\$0	\$160,600	\$161,700	\$167,900
Expenditure	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
Personnel Costs	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Operating Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Trustee/Benefit Payments	\$0	\$160,600	\$161,700	\$167,900
Total	\$0	\$160,600	\$161,700	\$167,900



Profile of Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided

Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
Bottom-line Impact Ratio (per Fed \$)	NA	9.48	11.18	19.6
Investment Leverage Ratio (per Fed \$)	8.66	4.64	20.23	19.5
Cost Per Impacted Client	17241	28235	24477	17345
No Jobs Created or Retained	31	75	102	130
No Enterprise-Wide Clients	NA	2	3	3
Manufacturers Served	165	190	200	210
New Manufacturers Served	58	60	55	70
Clients (projects and training)	160	150	189	205
Impacted Clients (NIST survey)	30	26	56	65
% Clients quantifying impact	NA	NA	71%	73%
% Clients Satisfied/Highly Satisfied	98%	99%	100%	97%
Average Satisfaction Level-out of 5	4.6	4.42	4.47	4.53

Performance Highlights

All TechHelp clients are surveyed upon project completion by a NIST contracted independent survey house. TechHelp clients served from January through December 2004 reported a positive economic impact of \$53,241,500 and indicated that due to TechHelp services they:

- Improved bottom line performance by \$32,517,000
- Invested \$16,974,500 in plant and equipment, information systems and workforce training
- Created or retained 150 jobs with a \$3,750,000 economic impact

Respondents also indicated that they were highly satisfied with TechHelp services, giving the center a rating of 4.53 out of a possible 5. These results earned TechHelp a perfect score of 100 on MEP's standard used to gauge the impact of individual MEP Centers. Evaluation is a key element of all NIST MEP programs. TechHelp clients are surveyed quarterly and results are used to assess the effectiveness of TechHelp services and the impact on the performance of client firms.

- TechHelp worked with 189 clients in 2004; 144 repeat clients and 45 new clients
- 94% of TechHelp clients responded to the NIST survey
- 71% quantified economic impact
- 100% of clients indicated they were "highly satisfied" with the quality of TechHelp services

For More Information Contact

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